

Backgrounder

In Tune Saskatchewan 2007

19 Saskatchewan artists donate tracks “In Tune Saskatchewan 2007”

“In Tune Saskatchewan 2007” is a compilation CD that will be used for promotional purposes throughout 2007, the year of Saskatchewan music. The CD was produced in partnership with SaskMusic. The artists are a sampling of some of the province’s most promising new musicians, as well as established musicians who have recently recorded new material. They include:

Sean Hogan, Saskatoon

With a stylistic sound that some industry observers have said is dangerously balanced between alt-country authenticity and modern rustic pop appeal, his sound is all Sean Hogan. Response to his 1996 debut album was loud and clear, earning him the first-ever CCMA Independent Male Artist of The Year Award, followed in 2003 by the nod for CCMA Roots Artist of the Year. Hogan has had 17 music videos on CMT Canada, released four albums and numerous singles. He regularly performs throughout Canada, and his newest album, “The Southern Sessions”, will be available in 2007.

Josh Palmer, Saskatoon

Fresh from placing in the Top Five of Canadian Idol, Josh Palmer proved he is completely unlike any other Idol contestant. He’s been hard at work introducing fans to a more personal side of his talents with a new, self-titled CD. The 22-year-old performer is prolifically sharing the soul of his songs with his audience through a beautifully powerful vocal range and his guitar virtuosity – whether touring across Canada with his six piece band or an intimate solo performance evoking the aura of Bob Dylan and the soul of Jeff Buckley. Palmer is, as Idol Judge Zack Werner professed, “the real deal”.

Sylvie, Regina

Their ability to layer individual sounds to create the single idea of a song has been capturing audiences wherever they play. In 2003 Sylvie's drive and hard work paid off with a nomination at the WCMAs for Outstanding Independent Album of the Year. Since then, it has been nothing short of a whirlwind of activity for Sylvie, and the band has received accolades far and wide, as well as co-headlining showcases at this year's NXNE and CMW Festivals. They were recently awarded the prestigious CBC/Galaxie Rising Star Award at NXNE, and are working on their next release.

The Blood Lines, Saskatoon

Formed from two sets of siblings in March 2006, The Blood Lines have wasted no time. The band has already released a full-length CD and toured to New York City twice, playing a showcase at CMJ in November before touring western Canada with The Dears. The Blood Lines' CD was named "discovery of the week" by Eye Weekly in Toronto, and their song Modern Science was cited as “the most played song” of November '06 on XM Satellite Radio’s The Verge. The band is finishing work on a new album and is looking forward to exposing themselves to as many people as possible.

Carbon Dating Service, Saskatoon

An unconventional band, they have more going for them than just a clever name. The group brings together electronics, harp, viola, a brass section, multiple vocalists and a miscellany of other instruments all piled on top of a standard rock rhythm section. As a result, Carbon Dating Service songs take a variety of shapes and sizes, ranging from quiet country gems to raging psych-rock experiments to triumphant pop symphonies. With their first album and tour behind them, the group is hard at work on a new recording project and preparing for a tour to Eastern Canada this summer.



Mils, Saskatoon

Mils aka Justin Knight moved to Saskatchewan early in life and grew up in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. He has been composing, producing, writing, and rapping on hip-hop albums as well as the stage since 1998. Besides producing music and performing with Innersoulflow, Mils has had work featured on 23 releases throughout North America and Japan. His incredible talent for producing fresh, new music with compelling unheard of beats drawn from the collective soul is attracting renowned underground hip hop artists to his door from all over North America, including heavyweights such as the Living Legends records (CMA, The Grouch, Luckyiam.PSC, Pigeon John (Quannum), and Scarub to name a few. After producing numerous records for other artists Mils decided it was time to release his own solo debut! "The AND Album" features guests from all four corners of North America. Along with success internationally Mils won "Best Hip/Hop/Rap Album" at the 2005 Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards. Future plans include releasing a brand new album with Eekwol called "Eekwol & Mils present...The List", which is composed, produced, co-written, and features Mils returning to the microphone as a rapper. Along with this new release Mils is excited to hit the stage, and step back into the performing aspect of his music.

Tim Vaughn, Saskatoon

His soulful voice and immaculate guitar, bass and keyboard work have been resonating through clubs across Western Canada for the greater part of a decade; energizing and inspiring fans. With sheer musicianship and interactive performance, Vaughn leaves audiences wanting more. His youthful energy and sense of professionalism has fans and peers within the music community calling him a "Renaissance Man" far beyond his years. Vaughn's style is derived from his individuality and experience in a range of genres, including funk, soul/R&B, blues, nu-jazz, rock and reggae.

Volcanoless in Canada, Saskatoon

The Volcanoless project had been brooding and formulating in jam spots across Saskatchewan for over three years, striving to combine precise rhythms and intricate melodies with the general appeal and high-paced energy of modern rock music. Three acoustic guitars play different and separate melody lines while still staying in the rhythmic domain set by the bass and drums. Through this concept, Volcanoless' genre can be stretched across a wide musical spectrum; touching elements of rock, alternative, folk, country, punk and dance. They recently released their first studio album.

The Deep Dark Woods, Saskatoon

Formed in 2005 with the intention of putting country-rock smiles on the faces of Saskatoon music fans, The Deep Dark Woods began shaping their sound, drawing on influences such as Gram Parsons, Pink Floyd and The Band. The group has completed two recordings, including their self-titled full-length album in 2006. This album, recorded raw off-the-floor, captures the band's true sound. They are already hard at work on their next album, due late 2007, and can be seen performing across Western Canada.

The Cracker Cats, Saskatoon

With two full-length releases to their credit, The Cracker Cats create a unique roots sound, encompassing elements of country, bluegrass, blues and folk with gypsy soul. Their high-energy, rowdy and passionate performances are full of fire, with fingers flying and tight interwoven harmonies. The Cracker Cats are currently working on a live album to be released later in 2007, and preparing for a summer-long tour that will see them make stops in the NWT, BC, Alberta, and Saskatchewan.



Five Star Homeless, Saskatoon

Five Star Homeless has steadily gained popularity on the Canadian prairie roots music scene since 2000. While taking pride in their instrumental diversity, the band's primary focus is on storytelling. Not of the tales and myths commonly associated with the Saskatchewan prairie, but the stories of the people whose effect on this proud and unique culture has been considerably more subtle and indirect. Their latest project is a performance and recording collaboration with rockabilly legend Ronnie Hayward, and they are looking forward to touring extensively in the coming months.

Jen Lane, Saskatoon

Jen Lane had quite the year in 2006. She hit the studio to record her "self-titled" third album, released in summer 2006 and was followed up with a west coast solo acoustic tour. Jen ended off the year with a showcase at the Western Canadian Music Awards, and has now been invited to showcase at the 2007 JunoFest. Jen's album was released to college radio in January 2007, and is receiving solid radio play nationally, as well as charting top 30 at college radio in Ottawa and Toronto. You can catch the Jen Lane Band on tour this summer.

Joël Fafard, Lumsden

Outstanding Instrumental Recording at the Western Canadian Music Awards 2006. Nominee at the Canadian Folk Music Awards 2006. Nominated for a Juno Award, 2007. Fafard is that rare breed of instrumentalist: the kind whose appeal reaches far beyond the realm of serious guitar enthusiasts. The gifted slide fingerstyle player writes stirring, melodic compositions that paint pictures as vivid as any song with words. He introduces them on-stage with hilarious commentary delivered in a "hillbilly farm-boy" stage persona that quickly wins his audience over. And when he sinks his chops into a number like "Face Down in the Rhubarb," the serious guitar enthusiasts aren't disappointed either.

Donny Parenteau, Prince Albert

A natural performer, Donny spent twelve years backing up U.S. artist Neal McCoy before returning to Prince Albert to launch a solo career. He's performed on the same stage as Merle Haggard, Tim McGraw and Faith Hill while touring the world, appearing on the Grand Ole' Opry and The Tonight Show. He commands attention with his versatile ability to bring many instruments to life – including the fiddle, mandolin and guitar. Parenteau performs with his band across Western Canada, has released numerous singles, and taken home a fistful of awards. His third CD is "What It Takes".

Francois Tremblay, Regina

Winner of the 2006 Saskatchewan Francophone Gala, Francois Tremblay is emerging as a one of the most recognized voices in Francophone music in western Canada. His debut CD, "Un Beau Matin", received a nomination as Outstanding Francophone Album at the 2006 Western Canadian Music Awards. Tremblay's songs offer a mix of socially ironic and political comments on top of pop-folk music rhythms. He is currently touring in Western Canada, and recording his second CD to be released this fall.

Carrie Catherine, Saskatoon

Imagine Diana Ross growing up as a prolific songwriter on the Saskatchewan prairie and you've got Carrie Catherine and the sounds of green-eyed soul. You'll hear a voice surprisingly sweet and sassy delivering poetic lyrics so imaginative you're hanging on every word to see where the story goes – all riding on a deep, soulful groove that makes your toes tap and shoulders sway. "Green-eyed Soul" is the title and sound of Catherine's forthcoming album, produced by Don Kerr (Ron Sexsmith, Peter Elkas, Hidden Cameras); it follows her 2005 release Venus Envy (produced by John Ellis).



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Jeff Straker, Punnichy

If you put Ben Folds, Elton John, and a little Rufus Wainwright in a blender and hit puree – you'd get Jeff Straker. This prairie-born singer-songwriter-pianist has been called "one of the hottest entertainers on the prairie music scene" (Northeast Sun). His performances have taken him across Canada to New York City, Panama, China and Ireland. Jeff's hilariously quirky sense of humour is enjoyed by his audiences in live performance, and was recently captured by CBC's Galleria, on which his performance aired multiple times. He will release his next album in summer 2007.

LunarTheory, Moose Jaw

Over the years, Jared Robinson has been involved with a number of bands, some of which were nominated for some of the country's most prestigious music awards (Sweetsalt). Being known for his "pretty" background vocals he began playing with the idea of putting them on the frontline. Crunchy guitars, ghostly pianos and epic string sections followed and quickly formed a sound that began a buzz – and his dream of a crisp new brand of Canadian pop had come together. Few would guess that Jared had composed, arranged, performed and produced all of the songs as LunarTheory.

Ghosts of Modern Man, Regina

A true live act notorious for its sweaty, raucous live show, Ghosts of Modern Man's debut "City of No Light" has garnered fantastic reviews from either end of the country. Influenced by such diverse bands as PJ Harvey, Hot Snakes, Radio Head, Gang Of Four and Fugazi, GOMM is making music that is inspired, honest and direct. Their live show generates an energy that rivals some of the best bands in this genre. "Regina's Ghosts of Modern Man play indie rock the way Pete Rose used to play baseball - fast, loose, and forever on the edge of the rules." (Steve English/Chartattack)



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